

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A chat manager system ~~[[(304)]]~~ for administrating an event-related chat room, the chat manager comprising:

a chat room creation device ~~[[(307)]]~~ which communicates with a chat server ~~[[(314)]]~~ to perform ~~at least one function selected from the group consisting of~~ creating, cancelling and joining a chat room, and

a trigger device ~~[[(306)]]~~ which is programmed to activate itself at the occurrence of an event and automatically sends a request for creation of a chat room to the chat room creation device,

wherein a subscriber associated with a decoder configured to receive and display chat messages is one of a passive and an active subscriber to the chat room with functionality to switch between the passive and the active subscriber,

wherein the passive subscriber is not connected to the chat room using a return link and visualizes chat room discussions on the decoder, wherein visualizing comprises: buffering the chat room discussions in a buffer for delayed broadcast, formatting the chat room discussions for broadcast, when the buffer becomes full, inserting the chat room discussions into a table for broadcast to the decoder, and broadcasting the chat room discussions to the decoder as part of a digital bundle comprising a service related to the chat room,

wherein the active subscriber is directly connected to the chat room via a return link.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~[[A]]~~ The chat manager system according to claim 1, further comprising:

a scheduler device ~~[[(306)]]~~ to maintain a playlist of events, each event being associated to at least one event information item selected from the group consisting of:
identification of event provider,
name of event,
begin time,
end time,

- name of chat room, and
topic of chat room,
the scheduler device being interfaced to the trigger device to program the trigger device according to event information of the playlist.
3. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The chat manager system according to claim 2, in which the request for creation includes event information.
4. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The chat manager system according to claim 1 ~~anyone of claims 1 to 3~~, the chat manager system further comprising:
a notification system ~~[(308)]~~ adapted to generate a notification signal intended to notify a potential user of the created chat room.
5. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The chat manager system according to ~~anyone of claim~~ ~~[[s]] 1~~ ~~[[to 4]]~~, further comprising:
a discussion transmission device ~~(307, 315)~~ which receives chat room data from the chat server corresponding to exchanges between users connected to the created chat room, and forwards the chat room data to potential users of the created chat room.
6. (Currently Amended) A digital television operator head end system ~~[[301]]~~ for broadcasting services to subscriber decoders ~~[[309]]~~, comprising a chat manager system according to claim 1 ~~anyone of claims 1 to 5~~.
7. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The digital television operator head end system according to claim 6, further comprising:
a broadcast device ~~(310, 311, 313)~~ used for preparing a transmission of information to the subscriber decoders, a notification server ~~[[308]]~~ interfaced with the chat manager to generate a notification message to be transmitted by the broadcast device, and
a service plan device ~~[[316]]~~ interfaced with the chat manager to provide a service number corresponding to the event, the service number being used by the notification server to generate a notification message for the concerned service only.

8. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The digital television operator head end system according to claim 6 [[or 7]], further comprising:
- a programming server [[(302)]] interfaced with the chat manager to allow remote a ~~distant~~ access [[(303)]] for programming.
9. (Currently Amended) A chat system for a digital television network comprising [[a]] the digital television operator head end system according to claim 6 ~~anyone of claims 6 to 8~~, and at least a decoder [[(309)]] for receiving and decoding services broadcast by the digital television operator, the decoder ~~at least~~ comprising a chat client [[(319)]].
10. (Currently Amended) A chat system for a digital television network comprising a digital operator head end system [[(301)]] for broadcasting to subscriber decoders [[(309)]], the digital operator head end system comprising:
- a chat room creation device [[(307)]] which communicates with a chat server [[(314)]] to create, cancel and[[/or]] join an event related chat room,
 - a trigger device [[(306)]] which may be programmed to activate itself at the occurrence of an event and automatically sends a request for creation of [[a]] the event related chat room to the chat room creation device,
 - a broadcast device ~~(310, 311, 313)~~ used for preparing a transmission of information to the subscriber decoders, and
 - a notification server [[(308)]] configured to generate a notification message to be transmitted by the broadcast device, wherein the notification message [[being]] is related to the creation of [[an]] the event related chat room,
- wherein a subscriber is one of a passive and an active subscriber to the chat room with functionality to switch between the passive and the active subscriber,
- wherein the passive subscriber is not connected to the chat room using a return link and visualizes chat room discussions on the decoder, wherein visualizing comprises: buffering the chat room discussions in a buffer for delayed broadcast, formatting the chat room discussions for broadcast, when the buffer becomes full, inserting the chat room discussions into a table for broadcast to the decoder, and broadcasting the chat room discussions to the decoder as part of a digital bundle comprising a service related to the chat room,

wherein the active subscriber is directly connected to the chat room via a return link.

11. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The chat system according to claim 10, further comprising:
a scheduler device [[(306)]] to maintain a playlist of events, each event being associated to at least one event information item selected from the group consisting of[:]
identification of event provider, name of event, begin time, end time, name of chat room, and topic of chat room,
the scheduler device being interfaced to the trigger device to program the trigger device according to event information of the playlist.
12. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The chat system according to claim 11, in which at least an event is related to a television programme, the chat system further comprising:
a service plan device [[(316)]] configured to provide a service number corresponding to a service on which the television programme is broadcast to the subscribers,
wherein the service number [[being]] is used by the notification server to generate a notification message for only the ~~concerned~~-service [[only]].
13. (Currently Amended) A method for administrating event related chat rooms in a digital television network comprising:
maintaining a playlist of events and related information, and
automatically requesting a chat server to create an event related chat room on occurrence of an event of the playlist,
wherein a subscriber associated with a decoder configured to receive and display chat messages is one of a passive and an active subscriber to the chat room with functionality to switch between the passive and the active subscriber,
wherein the passive subscriber is not connected to the chat room using a return link and visualizes chat room discussions on the decoder, wherein visualizing comprises:
buffering the chat room discussions in a buffer for delayed broadcast,
formatting the chat room discussions for broadcast, when the buffer becomes full,
inserting the chat room discussions into a table for broadcast to the decoder, and
broadcasting the chat room discussions to the decoder as part of a digital bundle comprising a service related to the chat room,
wherein the active subscriber is directly connected to the chat room via a return link.

14. (Currently Amended) ~~[[A]]~~ The method according to claim 13 further comprising:
receiving information to be broadcast from a content provider,
detecting in the information to be broadcast a determined information corresponding to
an event of the playlist, and
automatically requesting a chat server to create an event related chat room upon detecting
the determined information.
15. (Currently Amended) ~~[[A]]~~ The method according to ~~anyone of~~ claim 13 ~~[[or 14]]~~ further
comprising:
notifying potential users of a newly created event related chat room about its creation.
16. (Currently Amended) ~~[[A]]~~ The method according to claim 15 further comprising:
relating an event with a television programme,
identifying a service number used to broadcast the television programme in the television
network, and
using the service number to notify potential users.
17. – 18. (Canceled)
19. (Currently Amended) ~~A method for~~ The method according to claim 13 further comprising:
providing passive access to at least one of a plurality of chat rooms for subscribers in a
digital television network, ~~comprising by~~ gathering chat room data related to the
chat room from a chat server on which the chat room is opened, and broadcasting
the gathered chat room data to the subscribers.
20. (Currently Amended) ~~[[A]]~~ The chat system of claim 9, wherein the decoder for receiving
~~and processing services broadcast by a digital television operator head end system according~~
~~to anyone of claims 6 to 8 comprising~~ further comprises:
display means to display discussion data from a chat room on a television screen, the
discussion data appearing at the same time as a determined service currently
being broadcast and displayed.
21. (Currently Amended) ~~[[A]]~~ The chat system ~~decoder~~ according to claim 20, wherein the
decoder further comprises~~[[ing]]~~:

a pop-up display means that generates a pop-up window on the television screen, containing a notification about the creation of an event related chat room.

22. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The chat system ~~decoder~~ according to claim 21, wherein the decoder further comprises[[ing]]:

connection means to establish a return link between the decoder and the chat server, the return link being used to send discussion data from the decoder to the chat server.

23. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The chat system ~~decoder~~ according to claim 22, wherein the return link [[being]] is used as a bi-directional link that ~~allows to~~ receives discussion data from the chat server.

24. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The chat system according to claim 21 ~~decoder according to anyone of claims 21 to 23~~, further comprising:

MPEG filtering means for filtering the determined service among the services [[being]] broadcast according to filtering parameters, wherein the filtering means [[being]] is connected to the pop-up display means, and the filtering parameters are [[being]] used to activate the pop-up display means [[if]] when the creation of the event related chat room is related to the determined service.

25. (Currently Amended) A decoder for receiving and processing chat room data broadcast by a chat manager system according to claim [[17]] 1, comprising:

display means to display the chat room data on a television screen at the same time as a determined television programme.

26. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The decoder according to claim 25, further comprising:

a pop-up display means that generates a pop-up window on the television screen containing a notification about a creation of a chat room related to the determined television programme.

27. (Canceled)

28. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The decoder according to claim 25[[27]], wherein the return link [[being]] is used as a bi-directional link that allows to receive chat room data from the chat server.

29. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The decoder according to claim 26 ~~anyone of claims 26 to 28~~, further comprising:

MPEG filtering means for filtering the determined television programme according to filtering parameters, wherein the filtering means [[being]] is connected to the pop-up display means, and the filtering parameters [[being]] are used to activate the pop-up display means [[if]] when the creation of the chat room related to the determined television programme is related to the television programme currently being filtered.

30. – 31. (Canceled)